

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS DISCUSSION WITH PRESIDENT DIORI

REF: A. NIAMEY 3373 B. NIAMEY 3262

1. CODEL DIGGS ACCOMPANIED BY A/RDO HILL AND MYSELF MET WITH PRESIDENT DIORI LATE EVENING NOVEMBER 25 SHORTLY AFTER PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL FROM KINSHASA. PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY BOUBOU HAMA WHO ESCORTED CODEL ON TRIP TO TILABERRI EARLIER IN DJYNALSO ATTENDED. PRESIDENT DIROI DESCRIBED WHAT DROUGHT HAS MEANT TO NIGER IN TERMS LOSS OF ECONOMIC RESOURCES AND COST IN HUMAN SUFFERING AND EXPRESSED THANKS TO USG FOR RELIEF ASSISTANCE. HE THEN OUTLINED HIS HOPES FOR RECOVERY PROGRAM STRESSING UTILIZATION OF NIGER RIVER FOR LARGE-SCALE IRRIGATION PROJECTS AND CONSTRUCTING ADDITIONAL WELLS AND PASTURAGE SITES FOR LIVESTOCK.

2. REPRESENTATIVE DIGGS INFORMED PRESIDENT OF STATUS OF PENDING LEGISLATION CONCERNING US ASSISTANCE TO SAHEL INCLUDING PROVISION FOR STATEMENT OF US LONG-TERM COMMITMENT

TO SAHELIAN RECOVERY. HE ALSO SPOKE OF EFFORTS OF PRIVATE AMERICAN GROUPS TO ASSIST NIGER.

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3. CONGRESSMAN DIGGS ASKED PRESIDENT DIORI TO COMMENT ON THE REASONS AND AFFECTS OF THE INFLUX OF MALIANS INTO NIGER. DIROI AND BOUBOU HAMA RESPONDED THAT MALI CANNOT PROVIDE FOR MANY OF ITS NOMADS AND THEY ACCORDINGLY FLED TO NIGER. WHILE NIGER ITSELF TERRIBLY HARD PRESSED TO PROVIDE FOR ITS OWN PEOPLE, IT NEVERTHELESS HAS TRIED TO HELP. INFLUX HAS PARTICULARLY AFFECTED NIGER IN HEALTH FIELD WHERE REFUGEES HAVE ADDED EXTRA BURDEN ON LIMITED MEDICAL FACILITIES AND HAVE SPREAD DISEASES TO LOCAL POPULATION. DIORI SAID RESULTS OF USG FINANCED MEASLES CONTROL PROGRAM LARGELY VITIATED BY INFLUX UNINNOCULATED REFUGEES. REFUGEES ALSO BEGINNING POSE PROBLEM FOR GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATIONAL AND SECURITY FIELDS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM CODEL AS WHAT GON EXPLICITLY WANTED FROM THE USG REGARDING DROUGHT RELATED PROJECTS, DIROI RBSPONDED FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO MEET FOOD NEEDS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN FORMALLY SUBMITTED TO EMBASSY (REF A). SECONDLY HE DESIRED THAT USG BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO HIS REQUESTS AS ENUNCIATED AT OUAGA CONFERE IN THIS REGARD HE COMPLAINED THAT (FEI) TEAM WHICH RECENTLY IN NIGER DECIDED MAKE INPUTS INTO ON-GOING PROJECTS RATHER THAN ON NEW PROJECTS PROPOSED BY GON ALONG LINES OF HIS OUAGA SPEECH. THIRDLY HE WANTED USG MAKE FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO CLOUD-SEEDING PROGRAM WHICH GON PLANNING FOR NEXT APRIL-SEPTEMBER. LASTLY HE SAID HE WANTED EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO NIGER BY CONGRESSMAN DIGGS AND OTHER LEGISLATORS PLUS PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AFRICARE

AND INDIVIDUALS SUCH AS AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

RANDALL AND MCCLEOD.

5. COMMENT: PRESIDENT DIORI EITHER UNAWARE OF SHORT-TERM GOALS OF FEI MISSION AND TOTAL LACK OF ANY GON PROJECTS READY FOR MISSION FUNDING OR WAS DELIBERATELY MISREPRESENTING SITUATION. A/RDO HILL AND I EXPLAINED FACTS TO CODEL AFTERWARDS AND WILL TAKE UP MATTER WITH PRESIDENT DIORI DURING COURTESY CALL TO INTRODUCE RDO BARON.

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